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SUBJECT: AL TAJAMMOUAT QIZ PLANS BIRTHDAY BASH, U.S.

INVITES PENDING

Sensitive But Unclassified; please protect accordingly.

**¶11.** (u) Al Tajamouat QIZ park manager Halim Salfiti is planning in September to commemorate four years of successful QIZ activity at his industrial park. The event will highlight Tajamouat's success at bringing in investment and creating local jobs, and will formally inaugurate the "village workers" program designed by Salfiti. Salfiti also hopes to use the celebration (and anticipated participation by King Abdullah) as a hook to bring major U.S. garment buyers and potential investors to Jordan to see the QIZ success story. We will be working with Washington agencies to support this event, including possibly encouraging a trade and investment delegation to Jordan targeting QIZ businesses.

TAJAMMOUAT TURNS FOUR

**¶12.** (u) The Al Tajamouat industrial park in south Amman, approved by Federal Register notice in October 1999, has been the fastest-growing QIZ in Jordan over the past four years. According to park management, the park now employs some 13,000 people, including approximately 8-9,000 Jordanians, and claims to have the most invested capital (\$150 million) and operating firms (23) of any park involved in the initiative. The park, located near the Sahab industrial estate and very close to Queen Alia International Airport, was also one of the first to attract non-textile business, welcoming a West Bank-based jewelry manufacturer in 2001.

**¶13.** (u) Tajamouat has been an innovator in the QIZ community. One of the park's occupants, New York-based Cannon County Knitting Mills, has set the standard for labor development and community outreach by QIZ factories, and was as a result nominated by post for the 2001 Award for Corporate Excellence. Park Manager Halim Salfiti launched in 2002 a "village workers program," which recruits workers from poverty-stricken towns in Jordan's south (including Ma'an and Tafileh, traditional social unrest hot-spots) to live in U.S.-standard dormitories on the QIZ park site and work in QIZ factories. The program has been an unqualified success, drawing raves from factory owners, the workers themselves, and even the governor of Tafileh. The program currently employs some 400 workers, but Salfiti hopes to double that number as soon as additional dormitory space becomes available.

LIGHTS, CAMERA, QIZ!

**¶14.** (u) Salfiti, clearly impressed by the buzz created at the Dead Sea World Economic Forum and proud of the park's success so far, has decided to commemorate the fourth anniversary of the Park's approval with a gala dinner and sound and light show that will also serve as an investment promotion tool. Salfiti plans to invite current and prospective investors to the event, along with CEO's of major U.S. garment buyers. He has also begun planning with the Palace to secure attendance at the dinner by King Abdullah and Queen Rania.

**¶15.** (u) Salfiti hopes to hold the event in mid- to late-September, pending the King's availability. He is considering as an alternative holding the event in parallel with the Joint Economic Commission meeting to be held in Amman in the fall, to use expected high-level USG participation in the JEC as a "hook" to encourage participation by U.S. garment buyer CEO's. He has approached the Embassy/FCS for assistance with attracting U.S. buyer interest in the event.

COMMENT

**¶16.** (sbu) Salfiti's planned event is very similar to one the Embassy tried to help the Jordan Investment Board put together in Spring 2002, but which died from lack of follow-up on the part of JIB. Salfiti is much more likely to follow through, and has already committed over \$100,000 to the event and hired an event planner who was involved in the

Dead Sea WEF to make arrangements. He is ready to commit additional funds and/or fundraise in the QIZ and GOJ communities to make this event a success, and needs our help to deliver the U.S. buyers.

17. (u) We will work with Salfiti and the Palace on invitations, and will identify and send support letters from the Ambassador to invited CEO's. We will be in contact with interested Washington agencies about supporting this event, including possibly inviting CEO's out as a formal trade delegation led by an appropriate-level USG representative from Commerce or USTR.

HALE